

**TOWN OF HADDAM**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441**  
**WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2019**  
**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**  
*Subject to Approval by the Commission*

**ATTENDANCE**

X	Prem Aithal, Vice Chairman
X	Kate Anderson, Chairman
X	Mike Farina
A	Cindy MacNeil Sola
X	Lori Maggi, Secretary (Left at 7:35 p.m.)
A	Megan Mularski
X	Lori Tharin
X	Doreen Staskelunas (Arrived 6:38 p.m.)
A	Courtney Emschwiller Swokla
X	Robin Munster, EDC Coordinator
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Anderson, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and noted that Mrs. Staskelunas would be arriving shortly as she was caught up in rush hour traffic.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The pledge was recited.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION:** Lori Maggi motioned to approve the 13 March 2019 agenda as submitted. Prem Aithal second. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Public Comment**

There was no public in attendance.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Anderson apologized for the short notice for the cancellation of the February meeting.

**MOTION:** Lori Maggi motioned to approve the 9 January 2019 minutes as submitted. Mike Farina second. **WITHDRAWN.**

Prior to the above vote, Mr. Aithal noted one correction and the motion was withdrawn.

Correction to the 9 January 2019 minutes: page 2, 6a. Mucket – Update, first sentence – change “fund raising funds” to “money from the fund raiser”.

**MOTION:** Lori Maggi motioned to approve the 9 January 2019 minutes as amended. Prem Aithal second. Motion carried unanimously.

## **6. Old Business**

### **a. Mucket - Update**

Ms. Anderson reported that Mrs. Munster has been recruited to assist with this matter and thanked her. There was no further update.

### **b. Business of the Month – Discuss Ideas – Update**

Ms. Anderson reported she feels this matter should be tabled until next year as the Commission has a lot going on at this time and she would like to focus on the Market on the Green. Once the Market on the Green season is over, the Commission can focus on this as a winter project. Ms. Anderson asked for the Commission's consensus and all present were agreeable.

This item to be removed from the agenda until after the Market on the Green season has concluded.

### **c. Valentine Vendor Market – Follow Up**

Mr. Aithal reported that there were seven (7) vendors present – Dough on Main, Wendy Molloy Photography, The Higganum Company, The Barefoot Gardener, LulaRoe, Hoops by Olive, and Personal Image and Massage. The market ran from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with the first hour being rather quiet. Mr. Aithal noted that the day was rather windy and the sandwich board kept falling over. Mr. Aithal stated foot traffic was not the best; however, it was a first time market and the vendors were pleased and were interested in the Market on the Green concept. Mr. Aithal also stated a lesson learned - there needs to be some kind of communication besides Facebook prior to the market as there are others in town that do not have Facebook and would have been interested in this type of event. Mr. Aithal stated he did put up a sign in sheet for anyone who attended and perhaps there needs to be a discussion about setting up an email list for anyone interested in Market on the Green or any EDC or town events (to make it more of a community event and to get more traffic).

Mrs. Munster stated she felt the market went well and the vendors were happy with what they came out with considering it was a first time event. Mr. Aithal stated for product vendors it can be difficult to attend a Farmers' Market as most people are expecting vegetables. Mr. Aithal has a solid base of vendors and Mrs. Munster has provided a vendor list to work with as well.

Mr. Farina spoke in regard to advertising an event a minimum of one month ahead (probably two is better) and using the local newspapers (check for deadlines) and printing fliers. Mrs. Munster agreed. Mr. Farina stated although it may appear that you're being a pain by repeating the information, it gets people's attention and they need to have it in black and white.

Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Aithal for organizing the event.

This item to be removed from the agenda until late fall.

### **d. Joint Meeting with East Haddam EDC and Business Association – Follow Up**

Ms. Anderson reported she will attend the next East Haddam EDC meeting to address them during their Public Comment; and will report back at the April meeting.

## **7. New Business**

### **a. Budget**

**Fiscal Year 2019-2020** - Mrs. Munster reported she submitted a budget for EDC - \$5,500 request. Projects budgeted for included: 1) Lights for Tylerville – Received a bid for 17 Snowflakes - \$4,500 with

freight – that will match the snowflakes in Higganum Center. Mrs. Munster reported that the sidewalk and streetlights in Tylerville should be completed and the snowflakes can be installed. 2) Market on the Green Music - \$250-\$500 and 3) Printing and Developing Palm Cards – balance of the \$5,500. Mrs. Munster stated the Commission is not bound to these purchases should things change.

**Snowflakes** - Ms. Anderson reported that two additional snowflakes are needed and they are currently on sale for \$215 each plus freight.

**MOTION:** Mike Farina motioned to approve the purchase of two (2) snowflakes for \$430 plus the cost of shipping. Lori Maggi second. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Munster will place the order on Thursday, 14 March 2019.

Mr. Farina commented that the lights really brightened up the Center and it was nice that they stayed up as long as they did. The snowflakes have been taken down and are currently at Public Works.

**Garland** – Ms. Anderson stated she is unable to find appropriate length garland for the streetlight poles and asked the Commission their opinion on the matter. Most commercial garland is 15 feet. The Commission felt the shorter garland would be o.k. Ms. Anderson stated she will get pricing for Higganum. Also need LED lighting. A quick search on the cell phone showed 15 feet of pre-lit garland is \$115 per; same company that sells the snowflakes.

**MOTION:** Lori Maggi motioned to approve the purchase of replacement garland. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Anderson stated she purchased a few items for the vendor market and asked the Commission's approval for reimbursement - \$38.43.

**MOTION:** Lori Maggi motioned to reimburse Kate Anderson for the money spent for the Market on the Green. Mike Farina second. Motion carried unanimously.

**b. POCD Implementation** – Ms. Anderson explained the purposed of the POCD Implementation Committee (PIC) and distributed and reviewed an information packet pertaining to the goals for the Commission. Everyone was asked to review the information and further discussion will take place at the April meeting.

Mrs. Munster stated during the monthly multi-town EDC meetings, other town leaders have indicated they wish their town's POCD was like Haddam's.

**c. Resignation – David Fleig** – Ms. Anderson reported that Mr. Fleig has resigned from the Commission. Ms. Anderson reported that Mr. Fleig was a great asset to the Commission and thanked him for all he did for EDC. Thank you, Dave! Best wishes!

## **8. Subcommittee Reports**

### **a. Palm Card**

**Subcommittee members: Mr. Farina and Mrs. Staskelunas**

Ms. Anderson reported the subcommittee has not had time to meet regarding this, but will do so shortly.

### **b. Market on the Green**

**Subcommittee members: Mrs. Swokla, Mr. Aithal, and Mrs. Munster**

This item was discussed after the Valentine Vendor Market.

Mr. Aithal stated that Mrs. Sola has informed him that Ian Gibson, Wellstone Farm, is interested in the Market on the Green depending on the timing, dates, etc. Mr. Aithal will speak to Mr. Gibson to see if he

has any other suggestions. Mr. Aithal stated Mr. Gibson will be working with another farm at the Market and from there will branch it out. Mr. Aithal reported Thursday evening has been selected as the best time to do the Market, 4:00-7:00 p.m. to reserve the town green, Market 4:30-6:30 p.m., every two weeks starting on 13 June to 12 Sep (13 and 27 June, 11 and 25 July, 8 and 22 August, 12 September). The job is to lock up vendors, potentially food trucks, bands, etc. Mr. Aithal will meet with Ian in the next week and see if he can attend the April meeting. Mr. Aithal stated he has decided to open the Market to outside vendors as well in order to get more traffic.

Mr. Aithal noted that vendors from the pop up markets were interested. Discussion followed in regard to Commissioners helping to monitor the Markets, when Park and Rec hold their concerts (potential coordination); whether the Community Center could be used in the event of rain (Mrs. Munster will check the schedule).

Ms. Anderson suggested a master plan check list – Haddam Bulletin and Haddam Now/News publishing deadlines, reach out to vendors to confirm attendance, etc. In this way any one person can make sure things are moving smoothly. Mr. Aithal will bring a draft list to the next meeting.

## **9. Committee Reports**

**Haddam Elementary School (HES) Update** - Ms. Anderson reported the Board of Education (BOE) is restructuring the district and has opted to close HES. A multi-board meeting consisting of Haddam and Killingworth Boards of Selectmen (BOS) and Boards of Finance (BOF) was held on Thursday, 7 March 2019, regarding the proposed 2020-2021 budget and discussion followed regarding HES. The BOE put out a Request for Proposal (RFP), one developer responded – convert HES into apartments. There was no public comment allowed at this meeting. At a meeting on Monday, 11 March 2019 – BOE, BOS, Bill Warner, Haddam Town Planner, EDC and P&Z chairmen, and legal counsel for both the Town of Haddam and the BOE were present. Discussion followed in regard to the first right of refusal clause from 1972 BOE resolution and how to move forward with the RFP. The BOE voted unanimously to donate Swan Hill to the Town of Haddam or Haddam Land Trust pending legal discussion. BOS requested time for Haddam to explore acquiring HES. Ms. Anderson stated it is her understanding that First Selectman Milardo needed this vote from the BOE in order to bring this forward to a town vote or town referendum.

Mr. Aithal stated he was completely surprised that the BOE would donate Swan Hill to the Town of Haddam. Mr. Farina also stated he was surprised. Mrs. Munster stated the BOE realized after all the discussion that it didn't make sense for them to sell Swan Hill. Mr. Farina noted that P&Z placed a conservation zone on the property and made it clear that it was not a knee jerk reaction.

Mr. Aithal stated he was also surprised about the BOE's decision to offer HES for a nominal fee. Discussion followed in regard to Swan Hill and Higganum Cove (Gateway Commission having funds available; and signage for both properties).

Mrs. Munster stated at an August 2018 BOS meeting it was very clear by Lizz Milardo and Larry Maggi (Haddam BOS) this would have to go to referendum and would have to be a town choice. Mrs. Munster stated the selectman's assistant had sent a letter to the BOE at that time and this is when the process started.

Mrs. Maggi stated there are people who are concerned about having that building and taking care of it. Mr. Aithal stated at \$90,000 and approximately 7,000 residents it would cost about \$1 a month per person. Mrs. Munster stated an empty building can have problems. Ms. Anderson stated one way or another there will be answer. The vote will be happening the beginning of May.

Ms. Anderson asked the Commission if they would like her to reach out to the BOS to see if EDC can assist them prior to the referendum. Mrs. Munster stated the next BOS meeting is Monday, 8 April 2019. Ms. Anderson will reach out to the BOS.

Mrs. Staskelunas asked the condition of HES. Ms. Anderson stated the maintenance has been deferred. Mrs. Munster two issues are currently being worked on.

**Infrastructure Committee** - Ms. Anderson reported that the Committee did not meet in February and are scheduled to meet again in April. Fuss and O'Neill has a defined Scope of Work to start the facilities plan for the sewer assessment. Mr. Aithal asked if the overall time table for the study is still on track with Ms. Anderson reporting she believes so. Fuss and O'Neill is vested in obtaining public input and three public meetings are to be scheduled. Surveys will be mailed out to adjacent property owners regarding the installation/maintenance of septic systems.

## 10. EDC Coordinator's Report

Mrs. Munster reported on the following:

**Commercial Property** – A lot of movement in town right now. **Ely's Saw Mill**, Plains Road, has been sold and will remain a mill. **Jail** – A distiller out of Deep River has toured the jail and is considering using the facility as a distillery and leaving it as an historic piece for tourism. Will come back with his architect and go before the Buildings Committee. The individual is aware that the town does not want to invest any more funds. **Rossi's Brick Office Building** – Someone is interested in the building and meeting with the Rossis on Tuesday, 19 March 2019. **Nehemiah Brainerd House Bed and Breakfast** – May be sold and someone else coming in to use the property. 95 Bridge Road – Buildings/property on deposit. This is where River Valley, Tony's Package Store, and Steady Habit are located.

**Hartford Business Journal** – Article regarding new tourism agenda the state is putting out. Sweeping reform, 10 percent of lodge revenues will go to 25 percent (extra \$12 million). There will be a commission that will report directly to the governor.

**Make Music Day, 21 June 2019** – This event will be taking place throughout northeast Connecticut. The Garde Arts will promote the event. Mrs. Munster has inquired about Haddam doing this.

**Sustainability Event** – Event was well received and a video is online. Nice to see a lot of people who want to be involved. Also a fifth grader did a presentation on why plastic bags should be banned. This was wonderful and she's our future!

**Shred It and Electronic Recycling Event, 13 April 2019** – Community Center 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., \$5 per box (file box size). Also doing Take 2 electronics recycling for anyone who does not have a Transfer Station pass. Old cell phone pickup box at the TOB.

**Boy Scouts Bottle Recycling** – Mrs. Staskelunas asked if the Boy Scouts will be doing a bottle recycling event. Mrs. Munster stated she didn't believe they were doing one on 13 April.

**Community Calendar** - Mr. Farina stated that any fall/winter events should start going on a calendar in order to coordinate with other groups and not to Mrs. Munster stated she put events on the EDC page. Mr. Farina stated all the churches in town are coordinating their events.

## 12. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Kate Anderson moved to adjourn. Doreen Staskelunas second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Bunny Hall Batzner*  
Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 10 April 2019.**